

**STATE OF MAINE
PACKAGE/ENVELOPE HANDLING GUIDANCE
PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE**

Step 1: Initial Response

Handle package as potential evidence of a crime.

1. Has package been opened yet? If not, do not open. Are contents visible?
2. Secure area and isolate package;
3. Shut down HVAC and contain hot zone;
4. Evacuate surrounding vicinity and close room;
5. Have everyone who contacted material wash hands with soap and water, blow their nose and wash hands again;
6. Record names, addresses and telephone numbers of persons who handled package or were in immediate area;
7. Interview persons for credibility

Step 2: Threat Assessment

Level I - High Priority

1. Is package from an unknown source? Can source be contacted?
2. Are involved persons credible, police history, mental history, etc?
3. Is package accompanied by a threat, misaddressed, no return address
4. Is package leaking or contain dusts, powder (what is color, consistency?), stains, residue, liquid, solid material or foreign objects?
5. Do not smell it yourself, but did anyone report on unusual smell or odor?
6. Have multiple persons been exposed through contact or inhalation?
7. Is anyone isolated or quarantined?
8. Is anyone experiencing physical effects requiring medical attention?
9. Is the package suspected of containing an explosive device?

If two or more are answered in the affirmative:

- Treat as High Priority.
- Request assistance from the specially trained Weapons of Mass Destruction -Civil Support Team by calling Maine State Police at **1- 800-452-4664**. The State Police will contact MEMA, or during off-hours the MEMA Duty Officer, to notify them of the event and provide a point of contact for follow-up. MEMA will contact the appropriate County EMA Office.

If package is **not open** and Level I assessment is negative, the following actions should apply:

- Photograph as found;
- Wearing gloves and particulate mask, move package to isolated, controlled, ventilated area, not near HVAC intake,

- Open and examine contents.
- Discard gloves in sealed biohazard bag.

If there is no reason to suspect a threat, package can be bagged and discarded as trash or handled routinely. Washing precautions are still prudent.

If reason exists to suspect a threat or unknown substance is present or meets Level I assessment or other Level I indicators are triggered, follow instructions for Level I, High Priority guidelines.

If situation **does not meet Level I** criteria, but there is a need to test substance or if instructed by CST contact, follow Level II Guidelines below.

Guidelines For Level II Priority Situations:

The local Incident Commander, in coordination with the appropriate law enforcement agency is responsible for the following when a package or container has been opened and does not meet the Level I criteria. Law enforcement agencies shall treat the materials a potential evidence of a crime.

- Photograph package as found;
- Have all persons coming in contact with it thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water and blow their nose, washing their hands again;
- Using plastic/rubber gloves and a particulate mask if available, double bag the package or envelope containing the substance in the smallest possible package and place in sealed, rigid container, i.e. clean, empty paint can available from local paint suppliers. Discard gloves in sealed biohazard bag;
- Label properly including the name of the person packaging the material and the date, time of doing it and initial the sealed container;
- Record the names of all persons, their addresses and phone numbers who physically handled the package or who were in the immediate vicinity. Interview involved persons for credibility;
- Contact the Maine State Police at 1-800-452-4664, to advise a package is being delivered to Augusta and obtain a control number for it;
- The appropriate law enforcement agency is responsible for the delivery of the suspect package to Augusta in a sealed container stored in the trunk of a car;
- The package must be delivered to the Bureau of Health's Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory, State Street, Augusta if during business hours, or contact Capitol Security (287-4357) to coordinate the receipt of materials outside business hours; complete form with Lab or Capitol Security to maintain chain of custody;
- Testing will be accomplished and the results provided to the Maine Emergency Management Agency for relay to the appropriate law enforcement agency and County EMA Office.
- If test is negative, the appropriate law enforcement agency should investigate the threat according to normal procedure including Crime Lab analysis for fingerprints and DNA. Note, the Crime Lab will not handle evidence until it has been cleared by the Public Health Lab.

If investigative assistance or information is needed:

The local law enforcement agency can contact the Regional Maine State Police Criminal investigation Unit for assistance or guidance.

Notes:

Anthrax: Testing and treatment for anthrax is NOT indicated at the time of the incident (whether it is a high or low risk situation), and should NOT be initiated unless tests show the package may contain anthrax.

Ricin: Powdered ricin has similar physical characteristics to anthrax. In a case of suspected ricin, use anthrax protocols.

Updated information regarding bioterrorism is on the Web (www.maine.gov) and look up "bioterrorism".

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